

SENATE RESOLUTION 76
By Burchett

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Reverend John Kostas
of the Greek Orthodox Church.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to specially recognize those estimable individuals who have dedicated themselves to improving the quality of life for their fellow citizens; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee has been exceptionally fortunate during its history to benefit from the outstanding leadership provided by those committed Ministers of the Gospel who provide the bedrock strength that defines an orderly and just society; and

WHEREAS, such a dedicated pastor and leader is the Reverend John Kostas of the Greek Orthodox Church who left a 16-year career in government and politics to join the priesthood as an ordained minister; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure as a governmental employee, Father Kostas worked as a legislative aide with the New York State legislature, research director for a gubernatorial campaign and aide to United States Congressman Gerald Solomon of New York before being named as the speechwriter for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and

WHEREAS, prior to his being ordained to the priesthood in 1995, Father Kostas earned a Master's degree in Ancient Greek at the University of Maryland while working in Washington, D.C. before relocating to New York City to earn a Master of Divinity degree from St. Vladimir's Orthodox Seminary, graduating with highest honors as class valedictorian; and

WHEREAS, Father John Kostas was ordained by Metropolitan Iakovos of Chicago and began his pastoral career as assistant priest at St. Mary's Orthodox Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He devoted intensive study to the Greek New Testament, especially the letters of St. Paul, and in 2001 was granted a Leadership 100 scholarship to pursue advanced studies in the New Testament at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology; and

WHEREAS, Father John completed studies at the seminary and Harvard Divinity School and served as priest at St. George Greek Orthodox Church in Pittsfield, Massachusetts prior to receiving his Master of Theology in New Testament degree in 2005; and

WHEREAS, eager to serve God, the Reverend John Kostas enjoys sharing the fruits of his studies through preaching and Bible studies. He has traveled extensively through Turkey and Greece and visited all the major sites of early Christianity while continuing his study of Ancient Greek; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments and honors aside, Reverend John Kostas is fortunate to share the love and companionship of his devoted wife of 25 years, Presbyteria Janis Kostas, a former public health nurse who has established her own ministry devoted to visiting the ill and the homebound in hospitals and nursing homes; and

WHEREAS, the members of this legislative body are delighted to join in honoring this committed Christian and dynamic leader in the realm of the church; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we hereby honor and commend the Reverend John Kostas for his life of continuing service to God and humanity, as well as to his community, State and nation and offer our best wishes for much continued happiness and every success and satisfaction in all his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.